

CITY OF LEWISTON

CITY COUNCIL

MAY 23, 2006

SPECIAL MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL ROOM AT 7:00 P.M.

THE HONORABLE LIONEL C. GUAY, JR., MAYOR, PRESIDING.

PRESENT: Councilors Mendros, Bernier, O'Brien, Jean, Samson, Paradis, Rousseau, City Administrator James Bennett, and City Clerk Kathleen Montejo

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Moment of Silence.

FINAL BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2007 BUDGET

Mayor Guay opened the public hearing to receive citizen input on the proposed 2007 fiscal year municipal and education budgets. The following residents addressed the Council:

Charles Soule, 170 Bartlett Street - Education and public safety are the top two priorities. The police department is understaffed and needs more officers. Lewiston is in the last ten percent of educational spending compared to other towns. Teacher Aids are filling the teaching spots. City employees were cut by eight percent over the past few years to cover administrative fiscal mismanagement.

Councilor Rousseau asked Mr. Soule if he felt the budget should be increased to cover more employees. Councilor Mendros noted the Lewiston education technicians are one of highest paid in the area. Councilor Bernier asked the Chief of Police to comment on the police department staffing levels and if the citizens are in danger. Chief Welch stated the citizens are not in danger and he did not request additional staffing for officers in the department budget request.

Gloria Pettingill, 48 Gloria Avenue - The Mayor, Council, James Bennett and Phil Nadeau are all doing wonderful jobs and the city is really taking shape thanks to their hard work. Asked how much money is spent on the new immigrant residents and asked how much they are putting into the community. Mrs. Pettingill also asked if everyone who receives general assistance must do workfare.

The City Administrator stated in 1990 the City spent \$1.1 million on general assistance and in 2006 the City spent \$689,000 on general assistance with half of that reimbursed by the state. Sue Charron, Director of Social Services, stated that all able-bodied adults receiving assistance are assigned to do workfare and these assignments are at public works, the multi-purpose center and the library.

David Girard, 39 Fisher Avenue - Apologized to the Council and the public for his statements last week and noted there was a math error in his calculations regarding his new

property revaluation. He had stated it was a 300% increase and he said that he now realizes it was a 178% increase. He applauded the Council, Mayor and James Bennett for the decision to postpone the implementation of the revaluation. He noted it was a tough, challenging and stressful decision to make, but he noted it gave people hope and joy and they appreciate the action. He requested the Council rally the residents of Lewiston to drive to Augusta to make a point and to demand tax reform.

Jane Ouellette, 28 Tarr Avenue - Stated the Council and city staff are doing a lousy job and they are spending money like they are drunken sailors and are not accountable or responsible. She stated that the residents should not have to pay for the Council's mistakes.

Buddie Rackliff, 187 Sabattus Street - Said the group is doing a terrific job and he commends and applauds the decision on the revaluation delay. He noted the trash collection rate is increasing 54% from \$322 per year to \$600 per year. On top of this will be the stormwater utility tax. He asked why one and two family homes do not pay for trash pickup. He also urged the Council not to pass a budget without knowing how much the commercial and non profits will pay under the stormwater program.

The City Administrator stated the single family homes do not pay extra for trash pickup because they are not a business and the City views the multi-unit apartments as a business. The landlords own and operate the apartments as a profit making commercial business, and therefore need to pay the applicable costs.

Pierre Renault, 313 Ferry Road - He noted that the city taxes have gone down for the past few years, but the school and city budgets have increased. He wanted to know what the other revenue sources were and if the Council looked at cutting and reducing the budget.

The City Administrator reviewed the other funding sources such as state and federal funds, excise tax collection, other fees, etc. It was noted the Council will be reviewing budget cuts in the next two agenda items.

Paul Renault, 321 Ferry Road - Asked about the money for the aid to private and parochial schools. He noted it was mentioned at a previous budget workshop that using public funds for private use is not permitted. He wanted to know why the Council is making an exception for the parochial schools.

The City Administrator stated that state law allows the City to pay for transportation, text book and testing, and nursing services for Lewiston students attending parochial schools.

Gloria Pettingill, 48 Gloria Avenue - Asked when the city will have to start paying for new services that are being offered once the state stops paying for them. It was noted it varies with each program.

Roland Girardin, 36 Chadbourne Road - Stated he was glad the City postponed the revaluation and he noted the Council can not please everyone all the time.

Paul Renaud, 321 Ferry Road - Suggested that since the School Committee will be cutting an additional \$68,000 from their budget, that perhaps the city could do the same.

No other members of the public wished to speak on the budget and the Mayor closed the public hearing at 8:35pm. At this point, the Council took a ten minute recess.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT REGARDING FINAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE 2007 FISCAL YEAR EDUCATION BUDGET

Councilor Mendros stated that he would have proposed cutting more money from the school budget but he was absent during the School Board meeting when the budget vote was taken, due to a joint Lewiston-Auburn Council meeting held the same night.

VOTE (122-2006)

Motion by Councilor Samson, seconded by Councilor O'Brien:

To receive the recommendation from the School Department regarding adjustments to the FY07 Education Budget and to amend the School Committee's original recommended budget as outlined in the attached material entitled FY2007 School Budget Adjustments:

FY2007 School Budget Adjustment Recommendations

EXPENDITURES	ADJUSTMENTS	
School Committee Recommended Budget		\$41,427,116
Description	Amount	
Reduce Health Insurance & Fuel Cost	(96,330)	
Add 2 Portable Classrooms	23,952	
Excavate site for Portables	25,000	
Slab, Restrooms, Plumbing	20,000	
Electrical & Data Ports	10,500	
Deduct MPC operating costs	(253,716)	
Add'l School Reduction	(68,000)	
Total School Expend. Adjustments	(338,594)	(338,594)
Revised School Budget		\$41,088,522

Passed - Vote 7-0

FINAL ADJUSTMENTS TO THE 2007 FISCAL YEAR BUDGET

Councilors debated the pros and cons of implementing the stormwater utility district program for a full year or for a half year.

VOTE (123-2006)

Motion by Councilor Paradis, seconded by Councilor Bernier:

To implement the stormwater utility district for a half year, beginning January 2007.
 Did Not Pass - Vote 2-5 (Councilors Paradis and Rousseau in favor; Councilors O'Brien, Jean, Samson, Mendros and Bernier opposed)

Councilors then debated and discussed the pros and cons of the municipal waste collection for the churches, parochial schools and non profit organizations.

VOTE (124-2006)

Motion by Councilor Rousseau, seconded by Councilor Bernier:

To strike \$27,300 from the budget for the waste collection line item for the parochial schools and non profits. Did Not Pass - Vote 3-4 (Councilors Paradis, Rousseau, Bernier in favor; Councilors O'Brien, Jean, Samson and Mendros opposed)

VOTE (125-2006)

Motion by Councilor Samson, seconded by Councilor Jean:

To amend the City Administrator's original recommended budget as outlined in the attached material entitled FY2007 City Council Budget Adjustments:

FY2007 City Council Budget Adjustments

EXPENDITURES	ADJUSTMENTS	
Administrator Recommended Budget		\$42,408,124
Description		Amount
LAEGC Contribution (TIF funded)		(106,429)
Reduce Traffic Study Cost		(4,200)
Collection Schools, Churches, N.P's		27,300
MPC - Salaries	46,696	
MPC - Overtime	2,992	
MPC - Temp Wages	2,000	
MPC - Light/Water/Gas	39,319	

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Description		Amount
MPC - Outside Rental	4,350	
MPC - Special Rentals	581	
MPC - Repairs to Equip.	2,500	
MPC - Misc. Serv.	2,250	
MPC - Contract Waste Collection	1,680	
MPC - Fuel Supplies	56,046	
MPC - Household Supplies	5,000	
MPC - Recreational Supplies	1,400	
MPC - Other Supplies	855	
MPC - Household Equip.	4,476	
MPC - Maintenance Equip.	2,700	
MPC - Buildings & Structures	28,544	
MPC - Sub-total	201,389	201,389
LMRC funding		(50,000)
Debt Service Principal		(5,000)
Debt Service Interest		(1,650)
Contract. School Nurse		20,000
Storm Water		(1,526,000)
Regulatory Compliance (Leachate)		(5,000)
Agricultural Equipment		(10,000)
Building & Structure		(8,000)
LMRC		(5,000)
Auto Insurance		(1,500)
Property Insurance		(1,100)
General Liability Insurance		(2,500)
Employee Health Insurance		(10,000)
Credit for Employee Turnover		(19,900)

Description	Amount	
Reserve for Contingencies	(5,000)	
Total Adjustments City Expenditures	(1,512,590)	(1,512,590)
Revised Budget	\$40,895,534	

REVENUES

Description	Amount
Highway Block Grant	225,076
PILOT - CCI	41,000
Total Revenue Adjustments	266,076

Passed - Vote 7-0

APPROVAL OF AID TO PRIVATE AND PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

VOTE (126-2006)

Motion by Councilor Jean, seconded by Councilor Mendros:

To accept the recommendation of the Finance Director, and to establish the following allocation amounts for aid to private and parochial schools for textbook and testing services for Fiscal Year 2007:

	Elementary	Secondary
Testing	\$9.25 per student	\$8.25 per student
Textbooks	\$27.28 per student	\$40.43 per student

To further authorize a payment of \$20,000 toward the cost of a School Nurse in the soon to be consolidated Lewiston parochial elementary school.

Passed - Vote 7-0

APPROVAL OF MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT RATES

VOTE (127-2006)

Motion by Councilor Jean, seconded by Councilor Paradis:

To authorize the Finance Director to approve payment for mileage reimbursement at the

rates and manner as budgeted for the authorized use of privately owned vehicles in the conduct of official city business for each respective position:

Position	Allocation
Mayor	\$ 500.00
<u>Deputy Finance Director/City Auditor</u>	125.00
Business Development Mgr <u>Dep Dir of Economic & Community Development</u>	200.00
Chief Assessor	480.00
City Clerk	300.00
Deputy Treasurer	100.00
Development Director <u>Assistant to the City Administrator</u>	200.00
General Assistance Administrator <u>Social Services Director</u>	100.00
Library Director	200.00
Recreation Director	1,200.00
Tax Collector	100.00

Per-mile basis. All others not specifically mentioned above shall be reimbursed at the standard rate allowed by the Internal Revenue Service, excepting motorcycles which shall be reimbursed at the rate of 75% of the rate established for other vehicles, plus tolls and parking supported by receipted vouchers other than meters.

Passed - Vote 7-0

ADOPTION OF APPROPRIATION RESOLVE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

Councilor Mendros stated he is excited and proud of this budget, noting it is the second year in a row that the Council has cut the mil rate. Councilor Paradis noted that the not for profit organizations in the City account for \$430 million in untaxable property. He said that if only five percent of this value was taxable by the city, it would lower the mil rate by forty cents more for all tax payers. He urged residents to contact the State Representatives and Senators to implement tax reform. Councilor Rousseau said he echos Councilor Paradis' remarks. Councilor O'Brien said the State gets money from the sales tax, property tax and income tax. She said the state delegation is aware of the issues and plans to set up a meeting with city leaders.

City Administrator James Bennett complimented the Council on a job well done during a difficult budget year, noting they balanced the "needs" vs. the "wants". He said the legislative delegation is always responsive and a strong part of the team. He noted this budget came in below all spending cap limitations - those of the City Charter and LD 1. The Finance Director said the GNP-IPD is 5.86% and the budget increase was 3.75%. He

noted the budget is \$1.3 million below the LD 1 allowance - substantially under the threshold. Councilor Bernier thanked the employees and staff for helping with the budget and also thanked the citizens for their dedication to the process and the Council for their hard work. She noted she is excited about the new tax rate.

VOTE (128-2006)

Motion by Councilor Jean, seconded by Councilor Paradis:

To approve the Appropriation Resolve for Fiscal Year 2007 by a roll call vote:

RESOLVED, That there is hereby appropriated for the support of the several departments of the City of Lewiston for the fiscal year, commencing the first day of July, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Six, and ending the last day of June, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Seven, for the payment of the State and County Taxes, for ordinary indebtedness and expenses, for the interest on the debt, of the City of Lewiston, for the payment of lawful debts and dues from the City of Lewiston:

AGGREGATE BUDGET	\$ 81,984,056
MEANS OF FINANCING:	
General Property Tax	39,694,411
Anticipated Revenues	41,123,637
Prior Year’s Surplus	1,166,008
TOTAL	\$ 81,984,056

Passed - Vote 7-0

ADOPTION OF WATER AND SEWER APPROPRIATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

The City Administrator noted there are no rate increases proposed for either the water rates or the sewer rates.

VOTE (129-2006)

Motion by Councilor O’Brien, seconded by Councilor Jean:

To approve the Water and Sewer Appropriation for Fiscal Year 2007 by a roll call vote:

RESOLVED, That there is hereby appropriated for the support of the Water & Sewer Divisions of the City of Lewiston for the fiscal year, commencing the first day of July, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Six and ending the last day of June, in the year of Our Lord, Two Thousand and Seven:

WATER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS \$ 3,943,514

SEWER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS \$ 4,554,336

Passed - Vote 7-0

AUTHORIZATION TO USE THE INTEREST FROM THE FARRAR FUND

VOTE (130-2006)

Motion by Councilor O'Brien, seconded by Councilor Mendros:

To authorize the use of the interest from the Farrar Fund for expenses incurred in the Human Services budget, for medical and dental services. Passed - Vote 7-0

Mayor Guay reminded residents that the City is delaying the implementation of the revaluation for one year, they are not dismissing it completely. He urged residents to keep their revaluation notices and to keep their appointments if they have made them. He thanked the staff, City Administrator and Council for their work on the budget and said he is proud the city reduced taxes again.

VOTE (131-2006)

Motion by Councilor Samson, second by Councilor Jean:

To adjourn at 9:45 P.M. Passed - Vote 7-0

A true record, Attest:

Kathleen M. Montejo, CMC
City Clerk
Lewiston, Maine